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SUBJECT: MEDIA REACTION: U.S. PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION,  
WORLD ECONOMIC CRISIS, IRAN-INDIA RELATIONS, AFGHANISTAN;  
NEW DELHI - NOVEMBER 1-3, 2008.

This cable reports on relevant media reaction from India's large non-English press. Embassy New Delhi reports on English-language media via email in the daily "Early Edition". USG customers please write to Geeta Krishali (KrishaliG@state.gov) to subscribe to the "Early Edition."

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U.S. PRESIDENTIAL ELECTIONS  
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1. "U.S. ELECTIONS: THE COLOR OF CHANGE" op-ed article by Delhi-based foreign affairs columnist Ravi Amle in the November 3, 2008, Mumbai edition of centrist Marathi daily SAKAAL. "While the opinion polls indicate a definite nationwide preference for Barack Obama, there is still a fear that Obama may not make it to the White House. Similar to the fate met by past African-American mayor Tom Bradley who lost his bid for governor ( thanks to the tendency among whites to misleadingly tell pollsters that they will vote for a black candidate), Obama is also likely to lose the race because of the conservative American attitude towards race. If he loses due to his race and color, it will be a definite victory for the white racist lobby in the U.S... In the last few years, the U.S. has lost its standing in many respects at the international level. Obama's election to the highest U.S. post is in fact an opportunity for Americans to right the wrongs. All that has been lost during George W. Bush's 'election' can be won by Obama's election. We wish that wisdom prevails on the voters and that they do not

vote on racial lines. In fact it is now time for them to vote for a candidate with an ideology and definite leadership qualities...."

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WORLD ECONOMIC CRISIS  
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¶2. "FINANCIAL MARKET AT A NEW JUNCTURE," op-ed article in the November 2 right-of-center DAINIK JAGRAN Hindi daily by security expert K. Subrahmanyam: "U.S. President George Bush has called the world's 20 leading economies to a summit on November 15 in Washington to brainstorm on the ongoing financial crisis.... This summit will emphasize on the global financial regulatory mechanism. India as a growth engine can help in reviving the economic development in the U.S. Some American analysts are questioning the U.S. intelligence for being so indebted to China. This can anytime trigger a clash of the U.S. Interests. But, the U.S. does not have a national security threat from India. India's viewpoint toward the U.S. on the global economic crisis should be based on two-point policy. India should stand with the rest of the world for imposing strict regulation on the U.S. economic market. It should also be prepared for taking advantage of advanced technology development by coming closer to U.S. in the economic revival process. On the basis of its imagination and creativity India can use the current economic crisis in its favor."

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¶3. "FINANCIAL EMERGENCY: IS AMERICA'S SUPER-POWER STATUS UNDER THREAT?" Op-Ed article by columnist Muzaffar Hussain in the November 1, 2008 Mumbai-based centrist Gujarati evening daily JANMABHOOMI. "After the Soviet Union's decline, America emerged as the sole super power nation on the global horizon..... However, the current financial crisis in the U.S. threatens to dismantle that status that America has enjoyed over the years.... America's financial situation is so bad that it is being believed that nations who are aloof from it are happier. Venezuelan President Hugo Chavez went on to the extent of saying that the crisis on the Wall Street had shifted the global financial hub status from New York to Beijing. Russian President Dmitri Medvedev issued a statement that this is the beginning of the fall of America's super power status.... Besides this, the Taliban is getting reorganized as will not lose an opportunity to bounce back once America is out of picture. Thus there are problems galore for the United States at home and abroad that threaten its super power status...."

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IRAN-INDIA RELATIONS  
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¶4. "FOREIGN MINISTER'S IRAN VISIT," editorial in the November 1 centrist DAINIK BHASKAR Hindi daily: "The long awaited Iran-Pakistan-India gas pipeline issue is likely to be raised during Foreign Minister Pranab Mukherjee's three-day Iran-visit. There are disputes on high gas prices and the pipeline's security because Pakistan is demanding the transit fees. But, Iran, ignoring these basic problems, fears that India is not finalising this project under the U.S. pressure. Mukherjee will not just address Iran's concerns on the Indian Foreign policy, but he will also discuss hurdles in the way of the gas pipeline project. It is noteworthy that the Iranian officials have indicated that Iran can proceed only with Pakistan on the project without including India. Iran's recent statement that it is also considering to include a third party has triggered a speculation in the diplomatic circle that after India's quitting the project Iran can include China. It should be expected that after the Foreign Minister's visit the deadlock between the two

countries will be broken."

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AFGHANISTAN  
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15. "EFFORTS TO BRING TALIBAN ROUND", editorial in the November 2 right-of-center Urdu daily "MUNSIF", Hyderabad: "For the last few months, different circles have been subscribing the idea that talks with Taliban, for the restoration of peace in Afghanistan, have become indispensable. The whole world accepts that after decline of Taliban and fall of Qandhar, American forces or its puppet government lead by Hamid Karzai could not rule Afghanistan. Taliban or al-Qaeda is, even today, ruling the roost in major parts of Afghanistan. If, the U.S., today thinks that it is in possession of Afghanistan, it

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will be the greatest folly. It, anyhow, entered Afghanistan, but it is finding no way to come out of Afghanistan quagmire, despite being the world's super power. Accepting that Taliban are insurmountable in Afghanistan, America should not make any delay in starting dialogues with Taliban through the good offices of Pakistan or Saudi Arabia."  
MULFORD